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CULTURAL eMAGAZINE

INK OCHi

FIRST OF ITS KIND FROM KERALA

VOL-1 ISSUE - 39
JAN 07-13, 2022

39

- Manhattan Cocktail
- Talcher, Odisha
- Tarot Reading

THEYYAM
THE RITUAL ART
of Northern Kerala
By: Alex Reynolds

The lost legacy of the NILGIRIS
Book by: Indrani Radhakrishna

Stunning Sculptures from Driftwood
By: Jeffro Uitto

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Editor's Note

THEYYAM - A RITUAL ART

Theyyam is a ritual art form that is performed mainly in the Malabar region in Kerala. Theyyam also called as Theyyattam has derived from the words Deyvam meaning God and Attam meaning dance. In short it means the dance of God. Kolathunaad which comprises of Kannur and Kasaragode area is famous for Theyyam. Theyyam is also called by several names such as Thira, Thirayaatam, Kaliyaattam etc. Theyyam is carried out from Kaavu during the festivals.

The person who performs this theyyam is called as Kolam which means a figure or make up. These are forms are done by people from certain castes like velan, Malayan, Vannan etc. It is not their job to perform theyyams, but it comes by virtue of birth as these tribes are responsible for performing such theyyams. The people of these castes are good in folk dance and they are taught to sing songs for theyyams, applying make ups etc. These people are considered as untouchables by the Brahmins. Even then the Brahmins worship the theyyams performed by these people. Other communities like Mavilan, Vettuvan, Pulayan and Koppalan also perform theyyattam, but it is not as colorful as the theyyam performed by the velan, Malayan and Vannan.

There are around 400 different theyyams in Kerala. The main deity is goddess Bagavathi or Badrakali. Songs are sung praising the goddess about her victory against the demons.

Happy Reading...!!
Varghese T. Thomas

PRISM art group presents.. an exhibition of paintings
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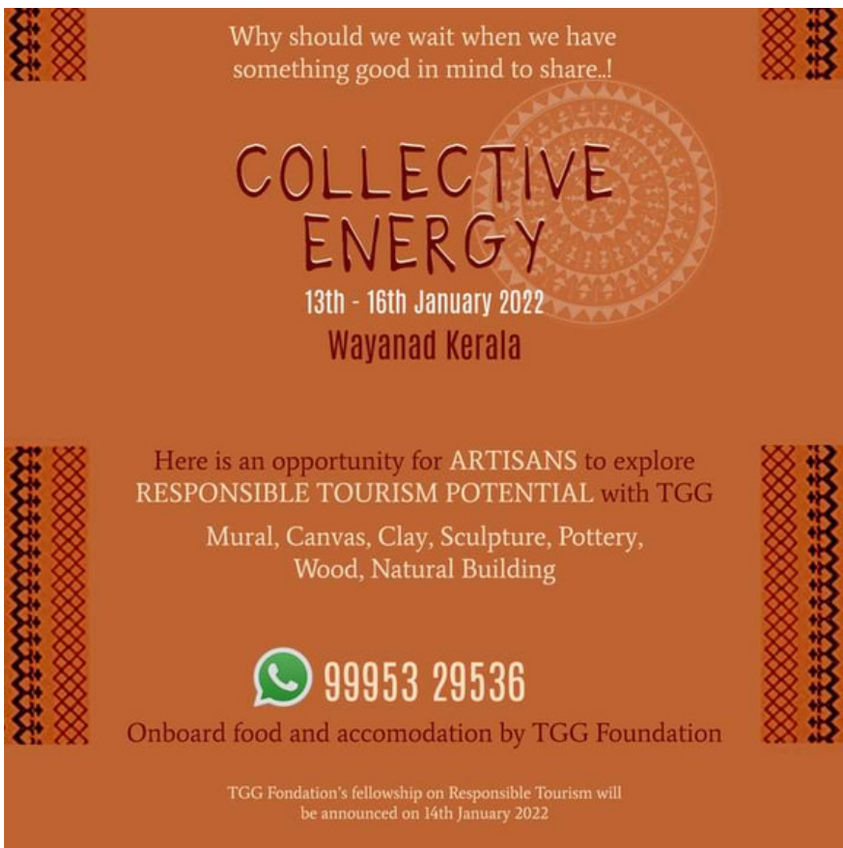
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Talcher, Odisha

Thought by ILF Expert: Merlyn Singh

Information about the Sulkis can be derived from a number of their grants on copper plates, a majority of which were discovered in the present-day state of Dhenkanal in Orissa, earlier known as Kodalaka Mandala.

One such copper plate has been found in Talcher, known as the Talcher Copper Plate. The said plate was a grant of the Sulki king Kulastambha, from which we derive that a type of silver coin called Rupya was said to have been in circulation in the region. However, no such coins have yet been discovered from this region.

Mr Monmohan Chakravarti, a pioneer of historical research work in Orissa, published the earliest known grant of the Sulki kings in 1895. Unfortunately at the time, the dynasty and the medieval history of Orissa was not widely known, and the name of the King, Kulastamba, couldn't be correctly read. >>

Talcher, Odisha

There's a lovely story on the origin of the name of Talcher.

"Long ago, a Raja crossed the Brahmani on a hunting expedition. Near Taleswari Devi, a hare killed the Raja's dog, and the Raja accordingly established a fort there. Sometime after, he was defeated by the Khonds of the region and fled to the forests. One day while asleep in the forest, Hingula Devi appeared to him in a dream and addressed him thus-'If you worship me and Taleswari, you will become victorious over your enemies, and in that case, you should name the place Talcher.'

The Raja followed this advice and took to the field. During a skirmish, Hingula Devi appeared in the shape of a tiger and destroyed the opponents of the Chief. After that, when the Raja was asleep, the Devi appeared to him in a dream and said that it was she and not a tiger, that had destroyed his opponents. She advised the Raja to sign his name with the initial of a tiger's head. The Raja named the place Talcher and bestowed a village named Padmanavpur. >>

In some of the Princely States, the August Revolts, aimed to bring doom to the British rule in India, were spearheaded. These states were Talcher, Athgarh, Dhenkanal and Nayagarh. In Talcher, Pabitra Mohan Pradhan took the lead. The revolt took such a violent form that the British Government had to resort to air-gunning.

It was on 26th August 1942 that 19 people under the leadership of Baishnab Charan Pattanaik, burnt the jail, police station, armoury and Government institution. From these 19, Madhi, Musha Mallick, Anukul Sahu and Anand Sahu were sentenced to death. They also burnt the Parjanga police station. The police opened fire at Janapada.

The policemen at the instance of the Government framed charges against the leaders who fanned the fire of the revolt remaining underground. They were charged under various sections of the Indian Penal Code, the Railway Act and the Defence of India Act. The trial took place in the court of the Special Judge, Cuttack and is known as the Congress conspiracy case. Many Congress workers were sentenced to five years of rigorous imprisonment. It was by the middle of 1943, the following year, that the August revolt came to an end. <>

Talcher, Odisha

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Jeffro Uitto

BY: STEVEN GEORGE

Jeffro Uitto born in 1982, was raised and resides in a small coastal town of Tokeland Washington. This is were his creative journey began. As a young child, he was fascinated with the organic forms that surrounded him. Growing up on the ocean with the mountains near by, there was no shortage of inspiration.

He started by carving small objects and creating forts and structures on the beach at a very young age. It was in high school that he realized a large potential of what he could create. With encouragement from a close family friend, he stepped into the world of organic furniture, that soon led him into the endless possibility of sculp-ture, often mixing the two. >>

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Jeffro Uitto

He feels it is important to celebrate natural forms without imposing his will on the materials. The result is his authentic style with a feeling of energy and life owing through it.
Through the years, he has been fortunate to start a family and share the journey with them. They are a big part of his inspiration. His lover Zela McKinstry, often collaborating ideas and sharing her vision - the outcome being some powerful works.
Together the artis-tic process gains potency and enjoyment, the collaboration between them, unique and progressive. >>

Jeffro Uitto

The works are displayed and collected throughout the US and in publications across the globe.

On the Washington coast there's a place where nature's leftovers get a second chance at stardom. The place is Knock on Wood, and Jeffro Uitto is the artist making the magic happen. >>

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Jeffro Uitto

Since high school Jeffro has been creating with wood, his favorite medium. This stuff isn't from a lumber mill either. Each piece is found and rescued from the shores of Tokeland, the banks of Smith Creek, or the valleys between the Willapa Hills. In due time the varied sticks, slabs, and roots are cured and then found a fitting home. >>

Jeffro Uitto

As a finished project comes together you can finally see what Jeffro's had in his mind all along. A gnarly rocking chair, elegant bedframe, or even a burl-topped bar ready for drinks.

Every project that rolls out of the shop enjoys the same careful construction whether it's a rose bud made from cedar shavings or a commissioned sculpture. Not everything is built right in the shop though. Clients have brought Jeffro on site to build one-off creations in places like Alaska and Hawaii. >>

Jeffro Uitto

Wherever he might be, Tokeland, WA is where Jeffro's heart is. While enjoying the sound of the waves, Jeff will be working away at his next creation. <>

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Theyyam In Kerala

COVER

By: Alex Reynolds

It's 4 AM, and the sky is still black.

Despite the hour, a crowd has gathered. Onlookers hold their breath, tense and expectant.

Young and old alike cluster around a small, sandy ring. Frenzied drummers begin beating a tattoo in perfect synchronicity. Young priests light palm frond torches, swishing embers off into the air. Older priests in crisp white lungi, south Indian sarongs, stand in front of a small temple, staring sternly.

Suddenly, the collective breath is released, and a sense of awe fills the void.

The god has arrived. The Theyyam can begin. >>

What is Theyyam?

“What is Theyyam?” is a question with a thousand answers. There are more than 400 different kinds of Theyyam in Kerala, India’s southernmost state.

In simplest terms, Theyyam is a ritual art form so ancient it predates Hinduism (500 BCE), though it has since adapted to include Hindu elements. It’s believed to be thousands of years old, from a time when tribal animism was the most common form of worship. These roots are still evident: trees, plants, and animals are worshipped alongside Hindu gods in Theyyam rituals. Some rituals involve blood sacrifices.

Music is also an important part of a Theyyam ritual. Traditional instruments such as the Chenda, Elathalam, Kurumkuzal, and Veekkuchenda are used during the performance.

Theyyam dance before the shrine

During Theyyam season, small temples and shrines across the northern regions of Kerala host hundreds of Theyyam performances. Today, at this ungodly hour, we’re watching a ritual at Neeliyar Bhagavathi temple near the town of Kannur. On the schedule: Kutty Theyyam. >>

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The god has arrived

In the face of gods

Kutty, the main god of the ritual, stands atop a wooden stool at the center of the ring. Two young priests hold his hands, steadying him as he circles in a tight, stomping dance to the drums. Bells and bangles clatter as he rattles his feet between rotations. He looms over the crowd, reminiscent of a giant snake poised to make a kill.

Suddenly, he leaps off the stool and begins spinning like an off-kilter top in the center of the sand pit. As he spins, his costume catches the torchlight, blinding eyes with its bright shimmer and sparkle. It's another homage to the natural world: his immense costume resembles a divine peacock, its shining red fan secured to a boxy skirt bottom.

The god's face paint is equally as ornate: wide eyes are sunken in black pits, while the rest of his face is a vivid orange. Red designs spider across his face, so delicate they're almost invisible.

The overall effect is distinctly supernatural, and that is precisely the point.

The men behind the gods of Theyyam

When not performing, Theyyam dancers are mere mortals. A tradition handed down through family lines, the dancers begin preparing for their divine roles at a young age, often in their early teens. Years are spent learning the skills required for every part of the tradition, from how to make costumes from coconut husks to the delicate art of face painting. >>

Divinely shiny

Dancing in minimal makeup before the morning performance

In the weeks leading up to a ritual, this dancer lived a life of purity. He consumed no meat or alcohol, nor did he lie or speak badly of others. He prayed at the temple daily and cleansed himself before the dance.

He began the day's events by singing and chanting stories in minimal costume. Only now, once painted and dressed in his most elaborate attire, is his transformation complete. Only now is he fully channeling Kutty.

Dance, trance

Kutty spins for what feels like ages. Sometimes he spins so quickly it's hard to focus in the low light. Other times, he spins slowly, as though drunk or dazed. Members of the crowd cautiously approach him bearing crumpled rupee notes, pressing them into the god's hands for a blessing as he continues to spin.

Occasionally he lurches dangerously close to the crowd, and the young priests with palm torches swing them at him to keep him in his sacred circle. Other times, the men join hands with Kutty, leaning in for support as they hop around in a rapid circle.

These rituals can go on for hours, depending on how long it takes for the god to enter a trance as he dances and spins to the drums. I couldn't say for how long he danced; perhaps hours, perhaps minutes. Time is nonexistent in the face of such captivating ritual. >>

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Come and get your blessings

Finally, Kutty dashes to the front of the temple, walking back and forth several times before finally collapsing onto a seat before the priests.

Young boys fan his sweating body with towels as the old priests bring him offerings of food and rice. As Kutty catches his breath, the crowd begins to disperse. Some move away to chat and compare photos with friends, while others move forward to whisper to the god, asking for blessings and advice.

A blanket of stillness settles over the temple as a lavender sky signals the sun's arrival. It's five in the morning, but this Theyyam ritual is far from over.

Most Theyyam ceremonies go on for days, weeks, months.

The ritual has only just begun.

How to see Theyyam in Kerala and When can I see Theyyam in Kerala?

For us, seeing Theyyam was one of the highlights of traveling in Kerala. You can see Theyyam performances all over the northern parts of Kerala (and neighboring areas in Karnataka) from October to May. November and December is the peak season to see Theyyam in Kerala, with multiple performances a day in temples all over the region. Theyyam performances are often part of Kerala tour packages during this time of year. >>

Theyyam rituals later in the day

The Kerala Tourism website has a Theyyam calendar, as does the Theyyam Calendar website. Note that dates and times often change, so it's best to check with locals beforehand to make sure something is actually going on!

Where to see Theyyam in Kerala

The towns of Kannur and Bekal are good hubs to see Theyyam in Kerala. Both are on the ocean, so you can combine a bit of beach life with culture.

Other places to see Theyyam include Kasaragod, Karivalloor, Nileswaram, Kurumathoor, Cherukunnu, Ezhom, and Kunnathoorpadi in North Malabar.

Practical tips for seeing Theyyam in Kerala

- You can take photos, but be respectful and avoid flash.
- Though performances happen at all times of day, be sure to catch one or two in the late night or early morning. That's when the fire comes out!
- There are usually other attractions alongside the rituals, such as dramas or music. It varies by shrine, depending on what the locals want to see.
- You can make a donation to the temple if you want, but most people give money just to receive a blessing. <>

IVORYBOOKS

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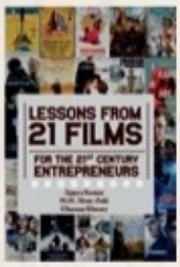

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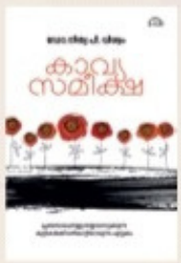

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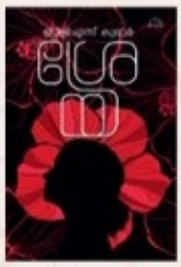

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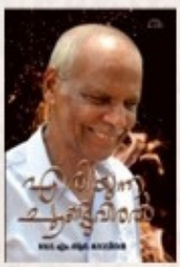

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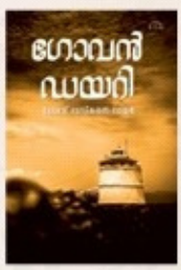

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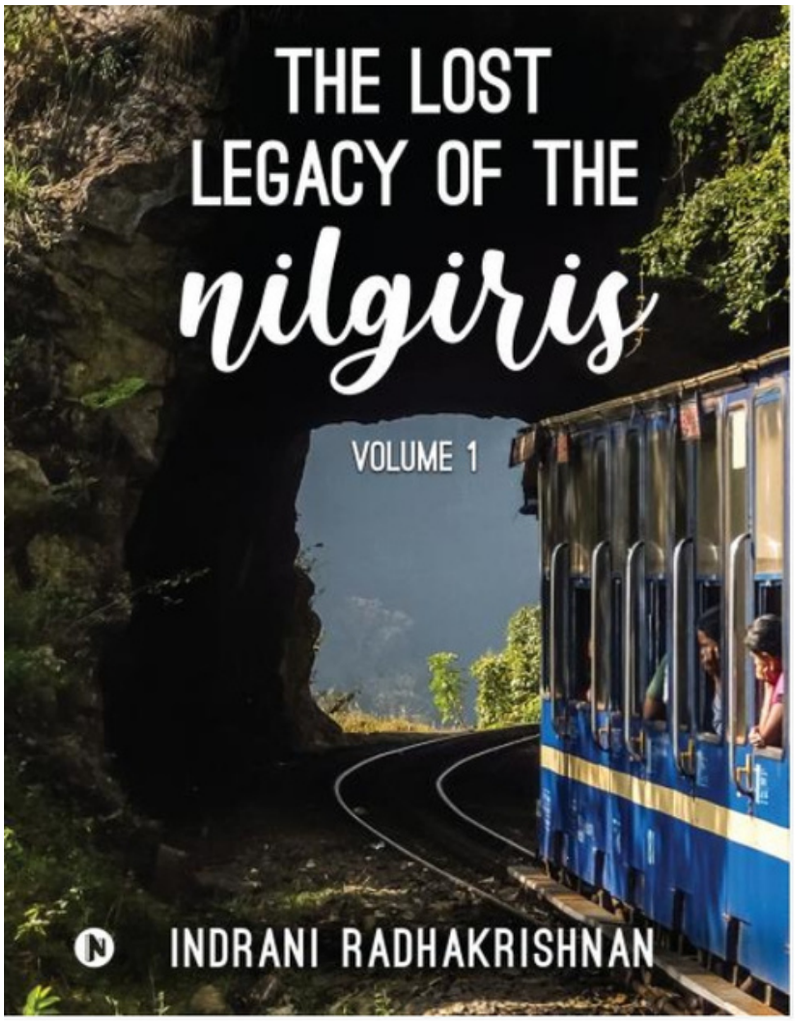
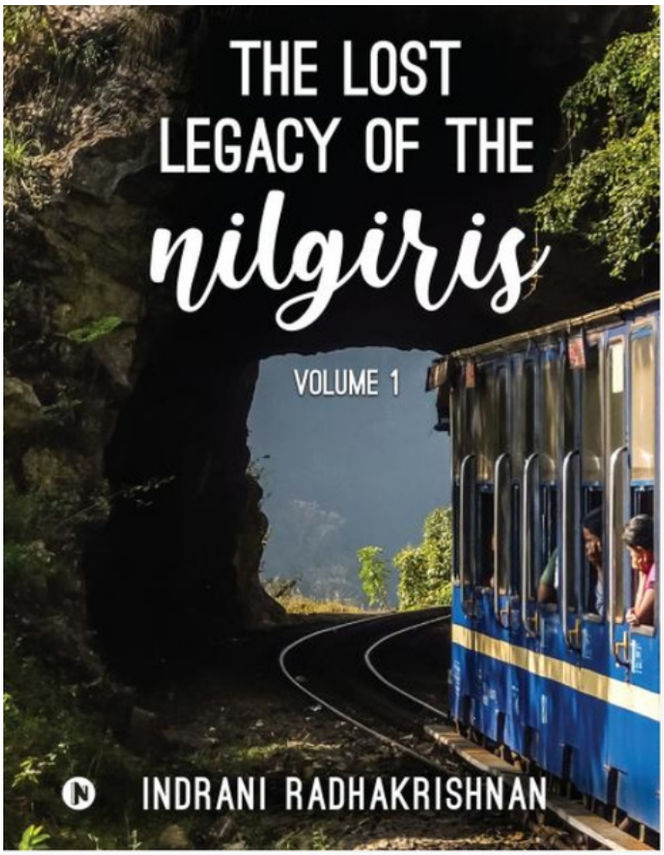
Author:
INDRANI RADHAKRISHNA

Indrani Radhakrishnan is an international award winner in peace and development, besides other awards. She is a lawyer and also has experiences in many fields like teaching, training, soft skills, medical transcription, business transcription, call centre, travel and tourism, besides being a writer of articles and poetry and speaker at various Rotary clubs, other meetings and conferences. However, her foremost passion is history, heritage and culture. This is her first book on heritage.



The book has a background of more than 10 years of research. Nilgiris has a rich history and heritage as it was the summer capital of the Madras Presidency. Many of the annual tourism events, held in the district headquarters of Ootacamund or better known as Ooty, are still the remnants of the British colonisation. The idea occurred when the author found many attractive old British buildings and became interested in their history. Soon she realized that many little details are not included in history books, and therefore she decided to pen down all her investigations for the Nilgiris people. >>



Description by: Notion Press

Nilgiris is in a way lucky to have been the summer capital, here the level of the English language is good, buildings have stood the test of time and people have adapted to many changes. It is sincerely hoped that this book will enhance people's knowledge and improve their awareness of the rich local history and heritage to preserve them. As it is a favourite haunt of tourists, it also has a splash of tourism-related information. Therefore, this book will be cherished and preserved by anyone who loves the Nilgiris, which was once known as the Nila mountain where Goddess Nila Devi was presumed to have lived. <>

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BGM: AJAYAN K. S. | Studio: GEETHAM MEDIA STUDIO, KOCHI
Recorded, Mix & Mastered: JINTO JOHN
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Manhattan

By Dharsana Vinod

The Manhattan cocktail is made by stirring together rye or Canadian whiskey with sweet red vermouth and a dash of bitters. The drink is usually finished with a cocktail cherry and is traditionally served in a cocktail glass.

What you need to make the Manhattan

For the drink

- 50 ml rye or Canadian whiskey
- 20 ml sweet red vermouth
- Dash Angostura bitters
- Ice cubes

For the garnish

- Cocktail cherry

How to make

- Fill the mixer with ice cubes and add whiskey, red vermouth and dash of bitters.
- Stir the contents of the mixer, then strain into a cocktail glass.
- Serve with a cocktail cherry to garnish.

From the Kitchens of EVOLVE BACK

- Vazhachundum Thoran - (Banana Flower)

The kitchens of Evolve Back are famed for the originality and sumptuousness of their platters. Made from the freshest and finest produce, and served in some of the most spectacular settings, the Evolve Back repast offers an extensive selection of the finest in Indian and Continental cuisines. Our table also boasts a creative vernacular flavour with chefs conjuring up delicacies inspired by the local food idiom.

Ingredients:

1.Banana Flower – 3 No.
2.Coconut Grated – 1.5 No.
3.Jeera Seeds – 25 Grams.
4.Green Chilly Slit – 15 Grams.
5.Turmeric Powder – 10 Grams.
6.Coconut Oil – 150 Ml

Method:

- Peel and cut banana flower in very fine chop and keep side.
- Mix coconut grated, jeera, green chili and turmeric powder together and make a paste and keep aside.
- Mix chopped banana flower chop, coconut paste and salt and rest for half an hour.
- Add Tadka with coconut oil, mustard seeds broken red chilly, curry leaves.
- Add banana flower mixture and cook it till banana flower well-cooked without adding water.
- Served hot.

Dancing Queen!!!
Clicked at Bharatpur

The Egret was skimming on the water for fishing and it looked like it was dancing on water.

OneWeek OneShot

By:
Sudhir Shivaram

Portraying KERALA

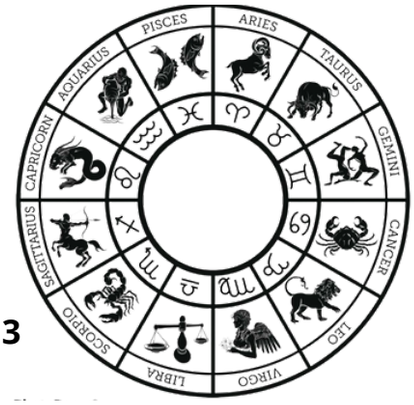
PC: SAAHIL RAHMAN

ALAPPUZHA

WEEKLY Tarot Reading

By: Chaitali Mukherjee

https://youtube.com/c/TarotPriestess1313



Your Next 7 Days

Jan 07-13, 2022

Stop and pause before every decision. You will have clarity and foresight in situations, that seemed like betrayals. You are adventurous, enthusiastic, powerful and determined to achieve, what you want, like an emperor.

ARIES

LIBRA

Don't be afraid of the changes, they will be good. A personal conflict will resolve. You will reach work targets, victory and success too. A man brings good news or solutions. You will be blessed with spiritual power to fight your doubts & fears.

Don't shoot ahead, wait for the right time. A favourable period for you, desires will get fulfilled. Good times with family and friends. A pregnancy or birth of a solid idea is underway. Good income, probably from abroad.

TAURUS

SCORPIO

You are protected by the higher power, and you might turn to spiritualism. You will be given the energy to face any crisis and do your work gladly. Once you abandon to destiny, fortune will never let you down.

Always think positively and fight uncertainties with courage. A friend or a professional will put an end to your problems. Your health will recover after a crisis, take proper rest. Take a financial opportunity presented to you.

GEMINI

SAGITTARIUS

Unpredictable health problems will impede your work progress. You need to let go of the old and the past to make space for the new. Don't regret leaving fantastic plans, that could be too ambitious. Accept a change, you have to take the risk.

Don't doubt the love that you feel around you. You have great relationships and they seem to be going well. Love and job fit perfectly. An offer of stability is coming to you. A news of work will come.

CANCER

CAPRICORN

Important changes in career and personal front. Reassuring news from afar. Advantageous work proposal and good money will come. A final decision regarding family will be taken. A move, shift and pregnancy on the cards.

A period of great resolution affecting different parts of life. Tempting business proposals and equitable earnings on the cards. Good professional and personal relationships will give peace. Trust a woman, she is a powerful ally.

LEO

AQUARIUS

A call from universe to curtail a lifestyle of parties and indulgence, or else you will be forced to live in isolation. Learn your lessons quickly, you have protection from the universe, pay heed. Surrender and see your growth in all sectors of life.

Key event this week is caring for others. A transformation in professional sphere. An interview or proposal means appointment away from home. You will get respect and recognition. A definite change in living or working situation.

VIRGO

PISCES

A change of role, a transfer will surprise or confuse you but it can turn into a sudden stroke of luck. Be optimistic and go with the flow. Take care of health as you can be exposed to risks. Your money seems good and your patience in love will be rewarded.

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